



Top Secret

National Intelligence Daily

Tuesday 14 May 1985

> Declassified and Approved for Release July 2000

Top Secret

1612 May 1985

copy 509





Special Analysis

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Prospects for Agitation

The renewal of the state of siege and the announcement of a protracted legislative calendar for transition to civilian rule underscore President Pinochet's determination to maintain strict political controls until at least 1989. In response, moderate opposition groups are trying to unite on a plan for civil disobedience that would culminate in a prolonged national strike.

A regime spokesman justified the renewal on the grounds of recent unauthorized meetings by opposition political parties, continuing terrorist activity, and the need for politicians to reflect on the damper of associating with Communists.

The spokesman presented a multipur legislative timetable for processing 27 basic laws, including those governing the political party system and electoral system, portraying this as evidence of the government's commitment to political liberalization.

The recent moves make clear, however, that Pinochet's hardline advisers have won out over the moderates, who have been urging him to relax controls.

Pinochet intends to string out the transition process until at least 1989. Moreover,

Chilean political observers generally believe that Pinochet intends to manipulate the junta into nominating him for reelection for another eight years, using the presidential plebiscite in 1989.

Opposition Reaction

Moderate political forces are beginning to recover from the disarray that followed when Pinochet first imposed the state of siege last November. Following the murder in late March of three Communists, attributed to rightwing groups, leaders of parties ranging from the far left to the moderate right issued a communique affirming their

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willingness to cooperate in forcing a return to democracy.
Members of the Front and other terrorists have continued in recent
weeks to stage bombings almost daily in several cities.

